

CONCERNED  
WOMEN *for* AMERICA

Statement of  
**Annabelle Rutledge**  
Executive Vice President  
of Concerned Women for America  
on the steps of the United States Supreme Court  
the day of oral arguments for  
***Free Speech Coalition v. Paxton***

*January 15, 2025*

To require simple age verification for access to pornographic sites online to protect minors from obscene material is such a common sense, low bar that I am frankly appalled such a law gets challenged all the way to the United States Supreme Court. But I am hopeful a resounding victory on this case can send a clear message to Big Porn to *stay away from our kids!*

Good morning, everyone. My name is Annabelle Rutledge, and I am here representing the hundreds of thousands of Concerned Women for America (CWA) members from all over the country who have fought tirelessly to pass age verification laws like the one involved in this case.

CWA members are women who are tired of Big Tech and Big Porn putting profits ahead of safety and decency, treating our children as expendable.

I come representing the thousands of our Young Women for America (YWA) leaders in colleges and universities, fighting the uphill battle against a culture that treats them as commodities to be exploited for pleasure and the corruption of the young.

As our CWA of Texas State Director, Jana Long, has told me, she is proud of Texas for never backing away from a fight, especially when protecting its homes and families. So, thank you, Texas! We are pleased to stand with you in support of laws that, at the very least, make it more difficult for obscene and exploitative materials to reach the eyes and minds of children. This should not be controversial.

Mothers know the devastating effects of obscenity. They live with the many adverse emotional, psychological, sociological, and physical health outcomes that hurt their children. They've seen their children struggle with its addictive nature. They see the increased rates of depression and anxiety, the acting out and violent behavior, sexual promiscuity, increased risk of teen pregnancy, child sex abuse, sexual trafficking, and how pornography distorts the views of the relationships between men and women.

An extensive survey of American youth revealed that 51% of boys and 32% of girls admitted to viewing pornography for the first time before they were 13 years old. About 15% of kids report that they first saw pornography online when they were under age 11.

Think about that. Under such predatory conditions, it is more than reasonable for states to take action against such a serious threat to children's health.

These facts are so compelling it is why the porn industry challenging this law tries to cloud the issue by calling itself the "Free Speech Coalition." Make no mistake about it: there is no Free Speech violation here. There is no constitutional right to show pornographic material to children, which is what these companies are supporting.

The Supreme Court has already said obscenity is not protected speech, not just for children, but for *anyone*. And here we are talking about material that is available (*easily* available) to children. They want to cloud the issue.

Everyone knows that with a simple search, any child of any age will be able to see sexually explicit, deviant, lewd, and obscene material, especially from the perspective of an innocent child.

Concerned Women for America prays the Court keeps the focus on the children that the state of Texas is trying to protect. Legal jargon should not distract them from that effort. Those trying to lure and entice the public with obscene material for profit, showing reckless disregard for the effect their practices have on the most vulnerable children in our communities, should never be able to hide behind procedural arguments to continue their predatory practices.

It is time for the Court to put children first.